

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-01 HEW-02 AF-04 ARA-06 EA-06 EUR-12

NEA-06 RSC-01 SS-15 NSC-05 L-02 /071 W

----- 045915

R 122313Z DEC 74

FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8449

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SGEN

SUBJ: SENATOR CHURCH INITIATIVE ON INTERNATIONAL
YEAR AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE AGING

1. SUMMARY. IN MEETING WITH REP OF SEN. CHURCH'S OFFICE,
UN SECT OFFICIALS INDICATED THAT A UN-SPONSORED INTER-
NATIONAL YEAR AND CONFERENCE ON THE AGING RAISED SERIOUS
PROBLEMS AND WAS PREMATURE AT THIS TIME. END SUMMARY

2. REP OF SEN. CHURCH'S OFFICE MET WITH UN SECT OFFICIALS
ON DEC 12 TO DISCUSS POSSIBILITY OF UN-SPONSORED INTER-
NATIONAL YEAR AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE AGING.
PRESENT AT MEETING WERE GEORGE HOWARD (DIRECTOR, UN
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION), AIDA GINDY (CHIEF, UN
SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND WELFARE SECTION), TAREK SHUMAN
(UN, SDD), WILLIAM ORIOL (SEN CHURCH OFFICE), DR. MARTIN
TAVES (HEW), PROF WALTER BEATTIE (SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY),
AND JAMES BAKER (USUN).

3. ORIOL OPENED MEETING BY OUTLINING GROWING US INTEREST
IN PROBLEMS OF THE AGING, BOTH DOMESTICALLY AND ON WORLD-
WIDE BASIS, AND BELIEF ON PART OF SOME THAT NOW IS TIME
TO PROCLAIM AN INTERNATIONAL YEAR ON THE AGING AND TO
CALL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE THIS SUBJECT.

HE SAID THAT ISSUE HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH STATE
DEPT (ASSISTANT SECRETARY BUFFUM AND JOHN MCDONALD)

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AND HE NOW SEEKING VIEWS ON UN SECT.

4. IN RESPONSE HOWARD NOTED THE HEAVY ADMIN BURDEN SUCH CONFERENCE'S IMPOSED ON HIS OFFICE AND STATED THAT THE ADDITION OF ANOTHER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE WITHIN THE PRESENT WORK PROGRAM (THROUGH 1979) WAS BEYOND HIS CAPACITIES. HE NOTED THAT LDCS DID NOT ACCORD HIGH PRIORITY TO PROBLEM OF THE AGING. NEVERTHELESS, HIS OFFICE HAD MODEST PROGRAM DESIGNED TO GATHER NECESSARY BACKGROUND INFORMATION WHICH COULD LEAD TO POLICY GUIDELINES AND POSSIBLY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. HE SAID SECT HAD DECIDED TO FOCUS EFFORTS ON AGING ALONG THESE LINES AND THAT ANY EFFORT TO DEFLECT RESOURCES TO AN INTERNATIONAL YEAR AND CONFERENCE MIGHT ENDANGER EXISTING PROGRAM. HE ADDED THAT USG MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER ADDITIONAL FINANCING FOR EXISTING UN PROGRAM ON AGING. IN THIS CONTEXT, MS. GINDY ADDED THAT SOME CONSIDERATION MIGHT BE GIVEN TO ESTABLISHING INTERREGIONAL ADVISOR SYSTEM TO TEST ACTUAL INTEREST OF LDCS IN PROBLEM OF THE AGING.

5. IN RESPONSE TO ORIOL QUERY, HOWARD SAID POSSIBILITY OF INTER-REGIONAL CONFERENCES UNDER UN AUSPICES RAN INTO PROBLEM THAT REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS ZEALOUSLY AUTONOMOUS AND HAD SETTLED ON RESPECTIVE WORK PROGRAMS FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE. NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID HIS OFFICE WOULD CONSULT WITH THE ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS TO SEE IF THEY INTERESTED THIS PROBLEM.

6. HOWARD SAID THAT AT FORTHCOMING COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (CSD) MEETING (JAN 1975), A EUROPEAN COUNTRY WOULD PROPOSE CONVENING A MEETING OF EUROPEAN MINISTERS OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS TO FOCUS ON PROBLEM OF THE AGING.

7. ON POSSIBLE LINK BETWEEN UN AND 1981 WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON THE AGING, HOWARD EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE BUT FRANKLY STATED THAT FOR BUREAUCRATIC REASONS, CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS MIGHT WISH TO RETAIN AUTONOMY.

8. IN RESPONSE TO DIRECT QUESTION, USUN REP STATED WE WOULD IN COURSE OF CSD ATTEMPT TO ASCERTAIN DEPTH OF CONCERN BY OTHERS, POINTING OUT NEED OF OBTAINING NEAR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FROM UN MEMBER STATES FOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OR YEAR.

9. IN INFORMAL CONVERSATION FOLLOWING MEETING, SHUMAN TOLD MISOFF THAT MEETING HAD BEEN USEFUL IN EMPHASIZING TO ORIOL NEED FOR PREPARATORY WORK, THE MANY PITFALLS LURKING IN THE UN SYSTEM, AND IN GENERAL THE DESIRABILITY OF AVOIDING PREMATURE ACTION.

10. COMMENT. USUN WILL FOLLOW UP, IN PARTICULAR IN SOUND OUT
REPS AT CSD MEETING. WE WOULD HOPE, HOWEVER, THAT DEPT
WILL STRESS TO HEW AND SENATOR CHURCH'S OFFICE DESIRABILITY
OF WORKING THROUGH MISSION RATHER THAN APPROACHING
SECT DIRECTLY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GERIATRICS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974USUNN05924
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740361-0959
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741238/aaaabgvw.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 JUL 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <27 MAR 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SENATOR CHURCH INITIATIVE ON INTERNATIONAL YEAR AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE AGING
TAGS: SGEN, OCON, UN, (CHURCH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005